

Reflections from IDF 2022

Dr Caroline Day reports from the International Diabetes Federation World Diabetes Conference in Lisbon, Portugal (onsite and online), held 5th – 8th December, 2022



Introduction

The Lisbon Congress Centre (CCL), nestled by the foot of the impressive 2.25km 25 de Abril suspension bridge, was host to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) World Diabetes Conference (WDC) first hybrid meeting. The 2021 meeting was due to be held in Bangkok but had to be cancelled due to Covid. Lisbon was the first IDF-WDC to be held onsite post-pandemic and this large convention centre had plenty of space for the 3,700 attending delegates (a minority of whom wore masks). By the entrance a metal footbridge over a couple of busy roads and railway track gave rapid access to the promenade on the banks of the Tagus River, with views across the bay to the 110m high Cristo Rei statue in Almada.

The previous WDC was held in Busan in 2019 and had 5,400 delegates. This hybrid meeting, with 1,900 online registrants, resulted in 5,600 people from 175 countries registering to participate in the meeting. The top six participating countries were Portugal (10%), India (8%), Pakistan (5%), Bangladesh (4%), USA (4%) and the UK (3%).

People and paper displaced

In-person registration at the conference centre was more like checking in at an airport: scan your registration barcode at a terminal, wait for it to print your badge, remove the backing paper to reveal sticky-backed card, fold (printed site out) and attach to lanyard. Hey presto! you've made

Table 1 IDF award lectures

IDF award lecture	Speaker and talk title
Clinical, Therapeutic and Technology Research Tuesday 10.15am	Dr David Kerr, USA <i>Digital Health and Diabetes – Access, Trust and Self-efficacy</i>
Diabetes Complications and Comorbidities Tuesday 3.45pm	Professor Sophia Zoungas, Australia <i>Honing and Harvesting the Evidence for Diabetes</i>
Diabetes in Women Wednesday 9.30am	Professor Ravi Retnakaran, Canada <i>The Life Course Perspective of Maternal Glucose in Pregnancy: An Opportunity for the Prevention of Diabetes and Heart Disease in Women</i>
Basic and Translational Science Wednesday 3.45pm	Professor Amalia Gastaldelli, ^a Italy <i>Adipose tissue implication for metabolic diseases</i>
Living with Diabetes Thursday 3.45pm	Renza Scibilia, Australia <i>Nothing About Us Without Us</i>
Epidemiology and Public Health Thursday 3.45pm	Professor Diana Magliano, Australia <i>The Changing Patterns of the Diabetes Epidemic</i>
^a presented lecture remotely	

your own conference badge (justifies watching Blue Peter as a child) and you are now free to roam.

Where are the conference bag, programme book and the glossy promotional material destined for the nearest bin? Nowhere to be found. There was a small pocket booklet with floorplans of the venue, a summary double-page spread with the daily timetable (extremely useful) and a larger

guide with schedules of the satellite symposia (also good). A must-have for this meeting was a mobile phone with plenty of charge: the drill was to log in to the free WiFi, download the conference App and commune with your phone whilst moving between sessions.

The App was easy to use, with initial options linking to the programme; speaker gallery; IDF activities; satellite symposia; ePosters and live sessions. Clicking on a ses-

sion of the summary programme opens the session schedule with talk titles, speakers and biographies – sessions could be watched live and are available to view for 30 days post meeting. The meeting can also be accessed from the IDF website www.idf.org

Satellites and sessions

The conference commenced with a relatively short (~1hour) opening ceremony on Monday evening, when the outgoing President, Professor Andrew Boulton noted that although Lisbon is a beautiful city to be enjoyed, it was important that delegates attended the sessions! There was a broad spread of sessions – some with novel interactive formats – making it possible to find something of interest at any time. The award lectures (Table 1) were delivered on-site, and the IDF Centenary of Insulin Award (Wednesday 4.30pm; supported by Lilly Diabetes) recognised a diabetes representative organisation for activity to improve the lives of people with diabetes. More than 50 organisations were nominated, and the winner of the €25,000 prize was based in Haiti (Fondation Haïtienne de Diabète et de Maladies Cardio-vasculaires).

The core scientific programme was held between 8.30am and 5pm across eight parallel sessions, with satellite symposia each day (12.30-1.30pm) sandwiched between

a 30-minute and 15-minute “movement break” and a couple of evening symposia (5.30-7.30pm) on Tuesday and Wednesday. Overall the programme kept to schedule, with chairpersons steering sessions to complete within the allotted online/filming timeframe. The ePosters could be viewed individually on a large screen within their topic section, but this space-saving system signals the cessation of serendipity.

On Wednesday (8.30am) the DINAMO (Diabetes study of IINAgliptin and eM-pagliflozin in children and adOlescents) trial reported at this meeting. The trial showed that by 26 weeks addition of empagliflozin to lifestyle, metformin and or/insulin in youths aged 10-17yrs with type 2 diabetes decreased HbA_{1c} by 0.84% (CI -1.50 to -0.19; p=0.012) and fasting plasma glucose by 35.2mg/dL (p=0.0035) versus placebo. Treatment with linagliptin reduced HbA_{1c} by a non-significant 0.34% (p=0.2935). See LM Laffel; session ‘Diabetes treatment across ...’.

Overall impression

Despite the absence of big drug trial results, the conference delivered a range of opportunities to update knowledge and see how practice might be transformed. Is there a place for instruments which can be operated by non-specialists to support research,

diagnosis and treatment - for example, the handheld RETeval® Device (LKC Technologies) for electroretinography? Might home oral glucose tolerance testing (see GTT @home kit from Digostics) be adopted for clinical trials as well as being an alternative to inconvenient, costly NHS clinic attendance? Should ‘time in range’ become the gold standard for glucose monitoring in clinical trials and care? The options for improving diabetes care are continuing apace, as exemplified in the session ‘The future is here and now - what’s in the pipeline?’ (Thursday 12.30pm).

Diary date

The inspiration for Christo Rei was the Christ the Saviour statue in Rio de Janeiro. If you’d like to see the ‘original’ and want an excuse to hone your Portuguese language skills, reserve December 2024 for a trip to the Brazilian capital to attend the next IDF-WDC.

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